

Listening Guide

Get Music  www.norton.com/studyspace**Howlin' Wolf, "Evil Is Goin' On"** Chess 1575

Words and music by Willie Dixon, produced by Leonard and Phil Chess and Willie Dixon. Released as a single in July 1954. Did not chart.

FORM: Simple Verse. Note that while the lyrics for each verse begin differently, they always close with the same lyrics. Returning lyrics that occur within a verse as they do here are called a **refrain**.

TIME SIGNATURE: 12/8 (shuffle in 4).

INSTRUMENTATION: Piano, guitars, bass, drums, harmonica, and lead vocals. Howlin' Wolf provides both lead vocals and harmonica. The song's composer and coproducer, Willie Dixon, plays bass, as legendary Chess musicians Hubert Sumlin and Otis Spann contribute on guitar and piano, respectively.

0:00–0:32	Verse 1 , 13 mm.	After a 1-measure introduction, the vocal enters with a 12-bar verse that includes a refrain in the second half. "If you're a long way from home . . ."
0:32–1:00	Verse 2 , 12 mm.	Begins as before but introduces a change in the first half of the lyrics, "A long way from home . . ."
1:00–1:28	Instrumental Verse , 12 mm.	High-register piano and harmonica share a solo, as Howlin' Wolf adds vocal interjections related to the story unfolding in the lyrics between harmonica bursts.
1:28–1:55	Verse 3 , 12 mm.	Vocal returns as lyrics pick up the story, "If you call on the telephone . . ."
1:55–2:22	Instrumental Verse , 12 mm.	Harmonica and piano share a solo again, with Howlin' Wolf focusing more on his harmonica playing this time.
2:22–2:52	Verse 4 , 12 mm.	Vocal returns and story in the lyrics reaches its conclusion. The final measures are adjusted slightly to create an ending for the song. "If you make it to your house . . ."